



AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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LIBRARY SERVICE TO LABOR NEWSLETTER *

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LABOR UNION PERIODICALS FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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American public libraries have a responsibility to the more than 15 million Americans who are members of organized labor. The points of view, as well as the activities, of this large segment of American society should be adequately represented in the library's periodical collection. Small libraries and even medium-sized libraries may find it difficult to select a representative collection of labor periodicals and still stay within the confines of a limited budget. The purpose of this list is to suggest types of labor newspapers and magazines that should be represented and to give examples of each. The librarian should take into consideration the particular nature of organized labor in his community and adapt the list to these needs. There is no better way to understand the interests of organized labor than to get acquainted with the men and women who are union leaders in the community.

NATIONAL FEDERATIONS OF UNIONS

There are two major federations of unions in the United States, the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The former, organized in 1881, has more than 100 member unions; the latter, organized in 1935, has more than 30 member unions. The railroad brotherhoods, several of which are not affiliated with either federation, are represented in a voluntary association of their chief executives known as the Railway Executives' Association. A number of large unions, such as the United Mine Workers and those ousted from the CIO for alleged communist domination, are not affiliated.

*The material published in the NEWSLETTER and the opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the policy or views of the ALA Joint Committee on Library Service to Labor Groups

LIBRARY OF THE
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1. American Federationist. American Federation of Labor, 901 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington 1, D.C. (Monthly) \$2. per year. This is the official monthly magazine of the AFL. It contains feature articles on labor issues, editorials, and news from national member unions and state federations. Recommended for all public libraries.
2. Labor's Monthly Survey. American Federation of Labor, 901 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington 1, D.C. (Monthly) \$1 per year. This bulletin presents AFL policies on such matters as the nation's economy, foreign economic affairs, and other current issues. Recommended for all public libraries.
3. AFL News Reporter. American Federation of Labor, 901 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington 1, D.C. (Weekly) \$1.25 per year. This tabloid newspaper offers a brief coverage of national and world news of interest to labor and a more complete coverage of union activities. Well illustrated. Recommended for all public libraries.
4. The CIO News. Congress of Industrial Organizations, 718 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. (Weekly) \$1 per year. This tabloid newspaper reports national and world news of interest to labor and emphasizes news of CIO union activities. Well illustrated. Recommended for all public libraries.
5. Economic Outlook. Department of Education and Research, Congress of Industrial Organizations, 718 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington 6, D.C. (Monthly) \$1.50 per year. Each issue of this periodical deals with a social or economic problem of special concern to workers such as: housing, workmen's compensation, old age, inflation and price control. The union's point of view is presented in clear, forthright language with numerous cartoon illustrations. Recommended for all public libraries.
6. Labor. Fifteen Recognized Standard Railroad Labor Organizations, 10 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington 4, D.C. (Weekly) \$1 per year. This weekly newspaper is considered by many as the best general labor paper published in this country. Although, there is considerable emphasis on railway labor, the paper also covers general labor news and national and world news of special concern to organized labor. Recommended for public libraries in communities where railroad brotherhoods are represented.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL UNIONS

There are some 200 national and international (i.e. they include Canada) unions in the United States, representing all the major crafts or industries. The great majority of these unions have official journals or newspapers which are issued monthly or more frequently. The craft unions (carpenters, printers, boilermakers, etc.) generally publish monthly magazine-type journals with feature articles, whereas the industrial unions (steelworkers, garment workers, textile workers, etc.) generally publish tabloid papers with the emphasis on news stories. Some unions, such as the International Association of Machinists, publish both types.

Few public libraries can afford to subscribe to the journals and newspapers of all national labor unions, nor would it be desirable. The decision as to what periodicals to get should depend largely on which unions are represented in the community and to what extent. A mining community, with workers organized by the United Mine Workers, for example, should have the United Mine Workers Journal. If the miners are organized by the Progressive Mine Workers of America, the library should have the Progressive Miner. It is a matter of knowing the community labor-wise.

A list of the national unions, their addresses, and the names of their periodicals, has been issued as Bulletin No. 980 of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Directory of Labor Unions in the United States, (25¢, Superintendent of Documents). The prices of these periodicals are generally nominal and frequently no charge is made to schools or libraries when the request is made through a union local. Which labor periodicals a library receives, however, ought not to depend on what it can get free.

A number of the leading national labor papers are listed here by way of example: The Advance (Amalgamated Cloth Workers, CIO); American Teacher (AFL); The Butcher Workman (AFL); The Carpenter (AFL); CWA News (Communication Workers, CIO); Electrical Workers' Journal (AFL); International Teamster (AFL); Justice (International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, AFL); The Machinist (AFL); Packinghouse Worker (CIO); Steel Labor (CIO); Textile Labor (CIO); Trainmen News (Ind); United Automobile Worker (CIO); and United Mine Workers Journal (Ind).

LOCALS, CITY CENTRALS, AND STATE FEDERATIONS

The union "locals" in a community are generally chartered by one of the national unions. The local, which is designated by number, may represent all or a portion of the workers in a particular craft in the community; or it may represent all or a portion of the workers in a plant or several plants. Many large locals issue their own newspapers which may vary from an irregularly published mimeographed sheet to a sizeable tabloid newspaper. Every public library should maintain a file of such local union publications, if for no other reason than for local history purposes. When there are a number of unions represented in a community these locals are frequently affiliated into what is known as a "city central" body or industrial union council. These organizations are concerned with problems common to the affiliated unions in the community. Many such central bodies issue a periodical which should be represented in the local public library.

Local unions may also be affiliated with a state labor body. In the AFL these state bodies are known as the State Federation of Labor. In the CIO the state bodies are known as the State Industrial Council. Many state federations and industrial councils issue news bulletins or other periodicals which should be represented in public libraries in "organized" communities. In addition to the official periodicals of city central bodies and state federations, there are a number of area or regional labor papers which may be financed or otherwise supported by organized labor. One notable example is Kenosha (Wisc.) Labor. Such papers, if they are well edited and adequately represent organized labor, may be more useful in a public library in the region covered than some of the national union journals. Librarians, however, should avoid subscribing to one of the numerous spurious labor papers which capitalize on the name "labor" without actually representing labor interests.

MISCELLANEOUS LABOR PERIODICALS

Organized labor has been very critical of the coverage of labor news in the daily newspapers. Most daily papers do not have full-time labor editors such as New York Times, which has several top-flight labor writers. A national daily newspaper, backed by both AFL and CIO, may be launched in the near future. Public librarians in metropolitan areas might wish to consider this new paper which is to be called the National Reporter. (1414 F Street, N.W., Washington 4, D.C. \$20 a year).

The Catholic church, which has for many years taken an official interest in the labor movement, issues a number of regional labor journals. One such paper is Work, published monthly by the Catholic Labor Alliance, 21 W. Superior, Chicago 10. (\$1 a year).

There are a number of labor-oriented "dope" sheets which profess to give inside news in capsule form. Most of these are too expensive for their slight value to the public library. For a large public library in an industrial area which requires such information John Herling's Labor Letter (weekly) is recommended. (\$20 a year).

INDEXES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

With the exception of Public Affairs Information Service, the general periodical indexes do not index many of the union publications noted in this article. PAIS indexes about a score of journals in the labor field, including six publications of labor unions: American Federationist, American Teacher, Economic Outlook, Equity (Actors), Labor's Monthly Survey and the Workers Education Bureau (AFL) Newsletter.

A new and specialized index in this field is the loose-leaf Labor-Personnel Index, a semi-monthly subject index of current articles on all phases of labor and personnel relations, (Information Service, Inc., 10 W. Warren Avenue, Detroit 1, Mich., \$24.75 per year). Of the 135 periodicals which it indexes regularly, approximately 60 are newspapers and journals of labor unions. Although this is an expensive service it should be useful to the metropolitan library which has a large number of the journals indexed. Less expensive, but also less useful, is the Index to Labor Articles issued bi-monthly by Rand School of Social Science, 7 East 15th Street, New York 3, which lists by very broad headings current articles from some thirty labor papers (\$2 a year).

An annotated list of books, periodical articles, and pamphlets on particular labor subjects (e.g. collective bargaining, railroad labor, apprenticeship, etc.) is issued four times a year by the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations, University of Illinois, 704 S. Sixth Street, Champaign, Ill. This publication, Labor-Management Relations, is prepared by the Institute in cooperation with the College of Education as a service for high schools. Schools and public libraries will be placed on the mailing list without charge.

Several periodicals which might serve as useful aids in selecting pamphlet materials by and about unions are: the monthly Newsletter of the Workers Education Bureau, AFL, (724 - 9th Street, N.W., Washington 1, D.C. \$1 a year), Labor Education Guide, published three times a year by the American Labor Education Service (1776 Broadway, New York 19. \$1.), the Monthly Labor Review (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington 25, D.C. \$6.25) which regularly contains a list of Publications of Labor

Interest, and the quarterly Industrial and Labor Relations Review (New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, \$4 a year) which also contains a list of recent publications.

BOOK REVIEW

Editor's note:

The following book review is published because the experience of universities in developing workers' education programs should be of interest to librarians contemplating special service to labor groups. The fact that libraries are mentioned only as meeting places and in one paragraph as a possible source of information and materials for local unions shows how much remains to be done before public libraries take their proper place in workers' education and before their contribution - actual or potential - is recognized.

Dorothy Bendix

Workers' Education at the University Level by Irvine L.H. Kerrison. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1951.

How can all of the democratic potential within the American labor movement be realized? How is organized labor to develop at the crucial grass roots level that leadership which is capable of translating into intelligent action the programs and policies that will make the greatest contribution to the welfare of their own group and the entire community? How, in a changing world, can the labor union find status and direction? These are some of the questions with which the intelligent labor leader, who sees in his organization one of the dynamic forces of our time, is concerned.

Recognizing that there are no swift, sure answers to these questions, American unions are more and more looking toward education for at least a partial solution to these and other problems. The past decade has witnessed a rapid expansion in the educational activities of unions, but the task is an enormous one and beyond the financial and technical resources of the unions themselves. Nor can they be expected to support alone such an ambitious project, for this is essentially an adult education job. It is for this reason that the educational resources of the nation, especially the universities and colleges, have a great stake in workers' education. For this reason too, we have the competent study of Dr. Kerrison.

Workers' Education at the University Level is based upon Dr. Kerrison's survey of current activities of colleges and universities in serving workers' groups, plus his own experience in charge of the Labor Programs division of the Rutgers Institute of Management and Labor Relations. Interest in this field on the part of institutions of higher learning has mushroomed since 1944. Although few schools have a full-blown program with their own staff, the growth of interest constitutes a significant trend which requires immediate and serious thinking about the objectives and operation of workers' education programs by those now in the field as well as any educational agency contemplating entering it.

Among the institutions covered in Dr. Kerrison's study there is no agreement upon a definition of workers' education. Many institutions fail to recognize the special nature of workers' education which sets it somewhat apart from general adult education. The former differs from most adult education because it is designed to give knowledge and understanding, not with the purpose of individual advancement, but to aid individuals as members of a group in solving group problems. This conceptual difficulty applies also to the problem of distinguishing between workers' education and labor-management education. The attitude of a majority of the universities is that the two are one and the same, the direct and immediate goal of their program being to get both labor and management to understand the problems of each other, thereby improving labor-management relations.

On the other hand, the opponents to this view, Dr. Kerrison among them, maintain that collective bargaining problems are settled at the conference table, not in the classroom. The immediate task of workers' education, they contend, is to help workers understand their own problems, since good relations emerge only from a situation in which both parties fully understand their own functions. Successful participation by the universities in helping organized labor meet its educational needs can be gained only by adopting what the author describes as "the functional approach". By this he means that educational programs for workers be built around their own felt needs and interests rather than what the university may believe the worker needs.

Another roadblock to successful workers' education is the failure by many to appreciate the importance of making any program a cooperative affair with joint planning between the union and the school. This ties in with what has already been said about reaching the felt needs and interests of the labor group, but it carries further into all the details of planning a program - class materials, instruction, time and place of class meetings. All should be the subject of consultation between the educators and the union.

Progress in the exciting and largely untouched area of workers' education is possible if approached on a cooperative basis. It can be done without threat to the existence of an independent labor movement, which is a fear of some labor leaders, and without our academic institutions sacrificing the intellectual freedom or objectivity so essential to democratic education. Workers' Education at the University Level is the most comprehensive study of this relatively new development in adult education. It is a valuable source book on the history, current practice, and problems of university participation in workers' education. It is a must for students of workers' education and those working in the field.

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